



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

FY 05 Alpena FRO Accomplishment Summary

Workforce Management

The Fisheries Program relies on a broad range of professionals to accomplish its mission: biologists, managers, administrators, clerks, animal caretakers, and maintenance workers. Without their skills and dedication, the Fisheries Program cannot succeed. Employees must be trained, equipped and supported in order to perform their jobs safely, often under demanding environmental conditions, and to keep current with the constantly expanding science of fish and aquatic resource management and conservation. The Alpena Fishery Resources Office in Alpena, Michigan is actively involved in workforce management. The following accomplishments are a list of examples of workforce management that the office provided in Fiscal Year 2005.

Region 3 MOCC Instructors Coordination Meeting



*Submitted by Adam Kowalski
Fish and Wildlife Biologist*

From January 20 to 22, 2005 Fishery Biologist Adam Kowalski attended the annual Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) Instructors Coordination Meeting in Minneapolis, MN. Attendees included: Anne Sittauer (National MOCC Coordinator)—Sherburne NWR, Dave Wedan (Region 3 MOCC Coordinator)—LaCrosse FRO, Stewart Cogswell—Green Bay FRO, Pat McDermott—Regional Office, Bob Drieslein, Bill Thrune, and Sherri Collins (budget)—Upper Mississippi NWFR, and Tim Peiffer—Marquette Biological Station. Instructors

discussed new ideas for the MOCC class, 2005 course scheduling and program budget, training for instructors, and additions and changes to the manual.

A significant amount of time was spent scheduling 2005 courses. Instructors tentatively set course sites and dates, assigned lead and assistant instructors to each, and identified any special needs for a course. Six MOCC courses were scheduled for 2005, including a stand alone open water course. Continued instructor training for open water instructors was briefly mentioned, because additional training is requested of open water instructors to further enhance their boating safety knowledge. Instructors also reviewed the new MOCC instruction manual to check for errors and ensure that all topics were covered thoroughly.

Open water instructors stayed late to discuss new ideas for the three day open water course. This is the first year that the open water module will be a stand alone course.

MOCC instructor coordination meetings are needed to ensure that all employees in Region 3 have the opportunity to attend mandatory boat safety training. This outcome is consistent with the Service's goal of providing employees with opportunities to maintain competencies, improve opportunities for professional achievement, and safely perform their jobs under the "Workforce Management" priority of the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

Gearing Up for the Field Season

*Submitted by Adam Kowalski
Fish and Wildlife Biologist*

During the month of April 2005, Fishery Biologists Adam Kowalski and Scott Koproski readied the Alpena FRO vessels for the field season. Kowalski and Koproski inventoried required and recommended safety equipment to ensure all needed gear was on board the vessels and in working condition. Flares were inspected and replaced if expired. Other general maintenance tasks included charging vessel batteries, ensuring all the proper tools were on board, checking spare spark plugs, checking fire extinguishers, installing vessel electronics like GPS and radar, and checking the basic condition of the vessels and trailers. This year we also inspected trailer surge brakes and had all trailer wheel bearings repacked. A new four stroke motor was also installed on our shock boat. These inspections are an annual process done at the Alpena FRO to ensure the safety of employees and the condition of the vessels.

These annual inspections help provide Alpena FRO employees with a safe working environment while in the field. Maintaining all vessels in safe and proper working condition ensures that employees can effectively, efficiently, and safely perform their jobs. This is consistent with objective 7.3 of the "Workforce Management" priority of the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

Boating Preparation



Photo – Alpena FRO, USFWS

*Submitted by Adam Kowalski
Fish and Wildlife Biologist*

On June 13, 2005 Fishery Biologists Adam Kowalski, Aaron Woldt, and Scott Koproski spent the afternoon providing Alpena FRO staff with a refresher on boat safety and maintenance. Woldt, Kowalski, and Koproski carefully went through every boat explaining vehicle/trailer hook-up and trailer towing, safety gear on each vessel and where it is located, boat launching procedures, explanation of the braking system (if any) on each trailer, special attention that a

particular vessel may need while operating it, and general maintenance before and after operating a vessel (e.g. checking/filling engine oil, checking trailer wheel bearings).

This was the 2nd annual pre-field season boat orientation meeting conducted at the Alpena FRO, and it seemed to be very helpful for those individuals that have not operated the station vessels since last field season. This will be an annual session for the Alpena FRO staff.

This boat safety meeting was developed to provide employees with opportunities to maintain competencies in proper boating procedures and to ensure that all employees are properly trained to effectively and safely perform any boating duties. This is consistent with the Workforce Management Objective in the Fisheries Program Vision for the Future.

CPR and Fire Extinguisher Safety Training



*Submitted by Anjanette Bowen
Fishery Biologist*

Alpena FRO staff received annual CPR and AED lifesaving training from Red Cross certified Bob Petersen of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery on June 28, 2005. Scene assessment and safe action are key to providing care in the event of an emergency. Thanks to Bob for the many years he has provided CPR and First Aid training for our station.

Staff also received annual fire extinguisher training on June 29 from Alpena Township firefighter Jim Sayler with Great Lakes Fire and Safety Equipment. Employees learned what should be done in the event of a fire and how to attack a small manageable blaze. Information was provided about the different types of extinguishers and types of fires they are effective against. Each staff member took part in extinguishing demo fires using a variety of different extinguishers.

Life saving and fire fighting materials are available in all station work areas, vehicles, and vessels. Training will allow Alpena FRO staff to safely perform their duties and allow them to effectively respond in an emergency situation, which is particularly important when working on boats and in remote locations. This activity is consistent with the Fishery Program's Vision for the Future for Workforce Management.

Alpena FRO Discusses Relocation with GSA



*Submitted by Jerry McClain
Fishery Biologist*

Alpena FRO Project Leader McClain met with General Services Administration (GSA) officials on August 24, 2005 to discuss possible relocation of offices to the lower floor of the Alpena Federal Building.

With the departure of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary to new offices in Alpena, most the lower floor of the federal building will be left vacant. In recent years GSA has discussed the possibility of closing off the second floor currently occupied by the FRO and the U.S. Coast Guard if adequate space became available on the first floor. Closing off the upper floor would save operational costs and improve access to remaining tenants. In addition to a lack of accessibility, a number of safety deficiencies have been noted that would require costly retrofit.

McClain and GSA staff toured the vacant office space and discussed options for relocating the FRO. A decision is expected from GSA in late fall of 2005.

Relocation of the Alpena FRO to the lower floor of the federal building would improve environmental conditions for staff and alleviate safety issues that have remained unaddressed. This activity is consistent with the "Workforce Management" priority of the Service's Fishery Program Vision for the Future.

Alpena FRO Environmental Compliance and Safety Audit

*Submitted by Anjanette Bowen
Fishery Biologist*

On August 24, 2005 the Alpena FRO participated in an environmental compliance and safety audit of the facility. Patrick McDermott, Craig Nibbe, and John Hoffman from the Division of Safety, Health, and Environmental Compliance conducted the audit in cooperation with station Collateral Duty Safety Officer Bowen and Project Leader McClain.

Environmental compliance audits are required every 3 years and conducted by Regional Safety Office personnel. Safety and environmental compliance meet requirements under the "Workforce Management" priority of the Fishery Program's Vision for the Future.

Ashland MOCC Course



*Submitted by Adam Kowalski
Fish and Wildlife Biologist*

Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) instructors Stewart Cogswell (Green Bay FRO), Adam Kowalski (Alpena FRO), Aaron Woldt (Alpena FRO), Tim Peiffer (Marquette Biological Station), Dick Steinbach (Mark Twain NWR), Bob Clevensine (Rock Island ESFO), Brian Pember (Upper Mississippi NWR), and Dave Wedan (LaCrosse FRO) put on a three day MOCC course in Ashland, WI from August 23 to 25, 2005. The MOCC course is designed to give operational and safety training to DOI employees that pilot DOI watercraft.

The following is a list topics covered during the course: surviving in the water, using floatation devices correctly, anchoring, required and recommended equipment for DOI vessels, changing a propeller, properly connecting a boat trailer to a vehicle, towing a trailer with a vehicle, USCG rules of the road, use of navigational aides, interpreting waves, tides, and weather, and proper boat handling.

Overall this course was a success, and all 18 students successfully completed the training. Students reported that they learned a great deal and felt that this course was a great starting point for learning to operate vessels.

MOCC training is a valuable curriculum designed to make Service personnel competent and safe boaters. Teaching MOCC courses is consistent with objective 7.2 of the “Workforce Management” priority of the Fishery Program’s Vision for the Future.

The **Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO)** is located in Alpena, Michigan and works to meet U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fishery and Ecosystem goals within Lake Huron, Western Lake Erie, and connecting waters of the St. Marys River, St. Clair River, and Detroit River. Activities include Aquatic Species Conservation and Management, Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management, Cooperation with Native Americans, Leadership in Science and Technology, Partnerships and Accountability, Public Use, and Workforce Management – all of which are conducted in alignment with the Service Fisheries Program Vision for the Future. The station is one of many field offices located within Region 3, the Great Lakes Big Rivers Region.



**Alpena FRO Accomplishment Report
FY 2005**

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For more information on Alpena FRO programs and activities or to view other station reports visit our website located at
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/alpena/>.